

exudes leadership, vision, and purpose. He's a giant of a man, an example for us all. It is a privilege to work with him and walk in his Congressional footsteps.

Thank you, Congressman Louis Stokes for everything you have done. The nation is indebted to you. We are grateful for your service. As you continue to battle this diagnosis, my thoughts and prayers are with you, your family and your doctors. Let us all continue to uplift and encourage the Stokes family.

HONORING LOU LENART

HON. BRAD SHERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 23, 2015

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Lou Lenart, a hero to both the United States and Israel, who passed away July 20, 2015 at the age of 94. Today we remember Lou for his service in the Marines during World War II as well as in the Israel Air Force in 1948 when he was dubbed "The Man Who Saved Tel Aviv."

Lou Lenart was born in 1921 to Jewish farmers in a small village in Hungary. When Lenart was 10, his family moved to the United States to escape widespread anti-Semitism. Sadly, he and his family were subjected to anti-Semitic taunting in his new home of Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. At 17, Lenart enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps where he fought in World War II and won the Gold Star flying in Okinawa. In 1948 Lenart became one of the first members of Israel's budding Air Force, which at that time had just four Czech-built German Messerschmitt fighter planes.

On May 29, 1948, Egyptian forces of about 500 vehicles were closing in on Tel Aviv, threatening the very existence of the two-week old state of Israel. Israeli commanders decided to risk all four planes to attack the advance.

As the most experienced pilot in the group (and in fact the only pilot with combat experience), Lenart led the attack, with future President Ezer Weizman as his wingman. Stunned by the sight of bona fide Israeli fighter planes, the Egyptians stopped their advance and were forced to retreat. Lenart's key role in this mission earned him the title, in many news reports, as "The Man Who Saved Tel Aviv." Lenart later told the IAF journal, "It was the most important event in my life . . . I survived World War II so I could lead this mission."

Following the war, Lenart helped in airlifting Iraqi Jews to Israel in Operation Ezra and Nehemiah. He also became a pilot for El Al Airlines and spent time living in Southern California, where he produced six feature films including *Iron Eagle* and *Iron Eagle II*.

Lou Lenart's legacy will live on in both Israel and the United States. He fought in our armed services to protect our freedom, and then risked his life again for Israel in its vulnerable and early stages. His life and story are an inspiration for those seeking hope and strength in the face of persecution. I send my sincerest condolences to his family.

HONORING THE "EASTLAND" DISASTER

HON. DANIEL LIPINSKI

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 23, 2015

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the victims of the *Eastland* disaster—a shipwreck which resulted in the deaths of 844 passengers and crew—on the 100th anniversary of the tragedy.

One hundred years ago, thousands of employees of Western Electric were preparing for a rare day off of work, taking a boat ride across Lake Michigan to enjoy an annual picnic. Tragically, for 844 passengers and crew on the *Eastland*, their vessel listed and tipped over, and they soon drowned in the Chicago River. Many were immigrants from Central and Eastern Europe, living in Berwyn, Cicero, and the surrounding Chicagoland area, and their loss left an enduring mark on these communities—22 families were completely wiped out, and 19 families were left without parents. I will always remember my grandmother talking about the tragedy and the mark it left on her.

The *Eastland* shipwreck remains to this day the greatest loss of life in a single disaster in Illinois history. It is a shame that the victims and heroes of the *Eastland* disaster have been largely forgotten by the American people. That is why I have introduced a resolution commemorating the *Eastland*. I believe it is absolutely necessary that we here in Congress pay our respects to the working class families who lost their lives on that terrible summer day. Along with honoring the victims and survivors of the disaster, my resolution includes references to the historical significance of the sinking of the *Eastland* and recognizes the brave first responders who risked their own lives to save hundreds of passengers and crew.

I would like to thank my colleagues from Illinois for cosponsoring this measure. I think it is also important to commend the hard work that the *Eastland* Disaster Historical Society has done in researching, promoting, and educating the public about this important historical event, and its broader effect on Chicagoland.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to remember the victims and heroes of the *Eastland* disaster, and to remain dedicated to avoiding such tragedies in the future.

CONGRATULATING THE DOWNTOWN FLINT OPTIMIST CLUB ON ITS 80TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. DANIEL T. KILDEE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 23, 2015

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I ask the United States House of Representatives to join me in recognizing The Downtown Flint Optimist Club on the occasion of their 80th anniversary.

Optimist International is a worldwide volunteer organization made up of more than 2,500 local Clubs whose members work each day to make the future brighter by bringing out the best in children, in their communities, and in themselves.

The Optimist Club of Downtown Flint was chartered in 1934. It is believed to be the sec-

ond oldest Optimist Club in Michigan. Since its inception, the Optimist Club of Downtown Flint has organized several other Optimist Clubs in the Flint area. The Club currently meets at the Flint Golf Club, but historically has met in the Durant Hotel, Italia Gardens, and the Sarvis Center.

The Optimist Club of Downtown Flint's mission is to foster an optimistic way of life for the improvement of individuals and society through a network of Optimists dedicated to ever-expanding service to its members, the youth, the community and the world.

The Club's projects and service programs over the years are copious. To name only a few, the Optimist Club of Downtown Flint has been in partnership with Boys & Girls Club, Whaley Children's Center, The Salvation Army, and Big Brothers Big Sisters.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud The Downtown Flint Optimist Club and extend my deepest appreciation to them for their years of service to the community.

TRIBUTE TO MR. LEROY JOSEPH JONES, SR.

HON. DONALD M. PAYNE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 23, 2015

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues here in the House of Representatives to join me as I rise to pay tribute to Mr. LeRoy Joseph Jones, Sr., and the many contributions he made as a dedicated public servant in the State of New Jersey.

Born and raised in Orange, New Jersey, Mr. Jones had an extensive career in public service and worked tirelessly to improve the lives of the residents in his community. After graduating from Orange Public Schools in 1953, Mr. Jones enlisted in the United States Navy in 1954 and served his country honorably for 12 years. Following his military service, Mr. Jones earned an Associate Degree in Urban Studies from Essex County College. In 1972, he attended the Community Action Training Institute at Rutgers University and later earned a Bachelor's Degree in Urban Studies at Shaw University in Raleigh, North Carolina.

As a trailblazer, he served as President of New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association and Board 33 Referee Association, where he became the first African American President in the history of both organizations. He was appointed by Governor Brendan Byrne in 1980 to serve on the State of NJ Parole Board Juvenile Panel from 1980–1983. Mr. Jones achieved another first, when he served as senior hearing officer on the State of New Jersey Parole Board. Some of his other accomplishments included Director of the Fellowship Civic Center in East Orange, Assistant Director of Recreation for the City of Orange, Acting Director of the Orange Community Development Program, member of the Orange Chamber of Commerce, Board of Trustee for the East Orange Neighborhood Development Corporation, Coach of the East Orange Tigers, and member of the management board for the YMCA of Orange.

His commitment to public service has changed many lives throughout the state. His contributions were recognized by numerous organizations such as the National Council of